

CROSSWAYS

"Making Christ Visible in His Community."

The Reverend Michael P. Flanagan, Rector of Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Simpsonville, SC 864-967-7470

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PRAYER

I pass by a gas station on a regular basis that has a sign next to it where the owner posts Christian quips for passers-by. The most recent was cute but thought provoking: "How do you like your prayer, well-done or rare?"

The sign did its job. I felt this little pang of guilt. "Am I praying enough? Am I really praying good prayers? Or am I just throwing up popcorn prayers when I think about it?" The owner almost had me. Then I thought, "Wait a minute. That's not what prayer is about."

The idea that God is sitting in heaven with a ledger sheet, taking notes on how often and how well we pray on a daily basis is not biblical or even helpful. Prayer is not about quantity or quality as much as it is about relationship. I used to say, "Prayer doesn't change God, prayer changes me." And that is true, but what is even more true is that prayer doesn't change God, prayer changes us. Just like any other relationship, we build a deeper bond when we spend time together. It is true with our spouse, with our kids and with our friends, and it is also true with God. Prayer is spending time with God.

In prayer we come to a deeper appreciation of God's sovereign power over all things. We come to recognize that all we have comes from God and one form of prayer is a simple prayer of thanksgiving for all we have – not just stuff, but also friends and family. God is our source of all good things. Perhaps a form of prayer could be simply breathing with gratitude. The air we breathe, the lungs we use, the heart that pumps life through our body are all gifts from God.

Thus, "well-done" prayer does not necessarily mean proper or stilted or rote, but it simply means a time focused on God. One of our members who teaches about the labyrinth has always said that a walk on the labyrinth is a purposeful time set aside for God, and God will always honor that time. In short, God will always "show up."

In the 11th chapter of Luke's gospel the disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray. Jesus says simply, "when you pray say..." and he recites the Lord's Prayer. That prayer is included in every worship service in our prayer book because it is the one prayer that Jesus himself taught us. It is so significant that at the Eucharist we say that "As our savior Christ has taught us we are Bold to say."

Jesus continues throughout the rest of the chapter to talk about prayer. He compares it to a friend who comes seeking help at midnight, and then says, "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a

fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:9-13)

Prayer is not about doing it "well" or "right," it is about showing up. If we will show up, God will show up. That is Jesus' promise to us. So "let us pray!"

Mike+

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REFLECTIONS ON FAITH AND LIFE

THE REVEREND LINDA GOSNELL,
ASSISTANT RECTOR FOR PASTORAL CARE

PRACTICING THE FAITH – OUR SPIRITUAL NEEDS

Comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

2 Corinthians 1:4

All persons have spiritual needs, conscious or unconscious strivings that arise in our spirits. They result from a seemingly innate impulse to relate to God and as a response, from what we understand from scripture, to God's desire to relate to us.

St Augustine of Hippo (354-450 C.E.) encapsulated this yearning when he wrote, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

Blaise Pascal, before his death in 1662, penned these words, "What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself."

Harold Koenig, M.D., in his 1994 book *Aging and God: Spiritual Pathways to Mental Health in Midlife and Later Years*, identified 14 spiritual needs important in mid-life and beyond. They are, I believe, relevant for people of all ages.

1. A need for meaning, purpose, and hope
2. A need to transcend circumstances
3. A need for support in dealing with loss
4. A need for continuity
5. A need for validation and support of religious behaviors
6. A need to engage in religious behaviors
7. A need for personal dignity and sense of worthiness
8. A need for unconditional love
9. A need to express anger and doubt
10. A need to feel that God is on their side
11. A need to love and serve others
12. A need to be thankful
13. A need to forgive and be forgiven
14. A need to prepare for death and dying

Koenig's book was written as a textbook for educators in fields of psychiatry, psychology, nursing and the allied health fields, social sciences and religion. His premise is that there is a relationship between religion and mental health and that spiritual maturity is a necessary component of successful aging. While I'm not recommending his text as a study guide, I do recommend exploration of, and conversation about, the fourteen needs Koenig has identified. Ask yourself and discuss in your small groups these questions: How are these needs being met in my life? Which of these spiritual needs should I pay more attention to meeting and how will I go about it? How do we as a community of faith encourage one another in meeting these needs? I'd love to hear your responses.

Linda+

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

CHRISTIAN FORMATION, ADULT, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH

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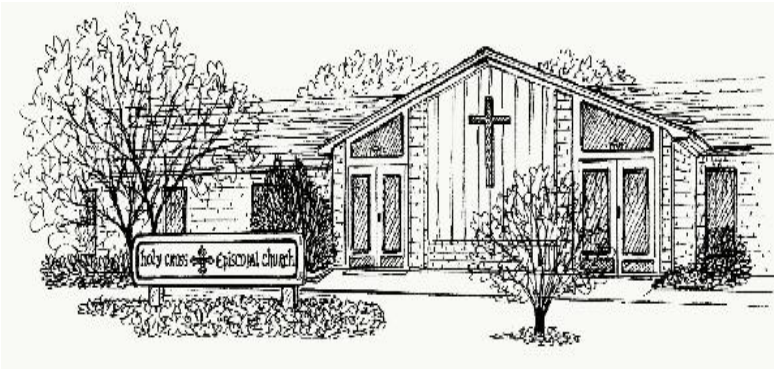
ADULT – DRAYTON GAILLARD WHDGAILLARD@CHARTER.NET



OCTOBER YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

TRUNK OR TREAT!

Come for a safe and friendly celebration of this spooky holiday from 6 – 7:30 p.m on Wednesday, Oct. 2! Please support this event by bringing your decorated trunk to the back parking lot by 6 p.m. Please have enough candy to serve 50 children.



LORD'S RESOURCES

ADMINISTRATION, STEWARDSHIP,
BUILDING & GROUNDS

SENIOR WARDEN – SHARON PUTMAN

SRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

JUNIOR WARDEN – MIKE NICHOLS

JRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

STEWARDSHIP – JIM WEBB

STEWARDSHIP@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

BUILDING AND GROUNDS – TOM JONES

JONE63194@GMAIL.COM

ADDICTIONS WORKSHOP

There will be a workshop from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10 on understanding addictions. Addictions can vary from substances to behaviors. This workshop will address the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of addictions and use the principles of the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous as a model for restoring health and balance. The workshop will be led by Bobbie S. Godwin, a licensed professional counselor and certified addictions counselor who has 30 years in personal recovery. Anyone interested in attending, please sign the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the hall.

WELLNESS MINISTRY

DO YOU KNOW YOUR NUMBERS?

High blood pressure also known as hypertension and HTN is a silent disease. The only way to know you have it is to get your pressure checked.

Your BP is usually checked at your doctor's office during routine visits or at a screening. Blood pressure checks should start at age 20.

Blood pressure is how hard your blood pushes against the walls of your arteries when your heart pumps blood. A blood pressure test measures how hard your heart is working to pump blood through the body. When blood pressure goes unchecked, it can lead to heart attack, stroke and chronic kidney disease. If untreated it can cause vision loss, damage to heart, stroke, erectile dysfunction, memory loss, angina, peripheral artery disease and fluid in the lungs.

Blood pressure is measured in two numbers and is recorded as a ratio (120/80) . The top number, or systolic, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats. The bottom number or diastolic measures the pressure in the arteries between heartbeats. The top number is most important for people over 50. The major risk factor is cardiovascular disease. Blood pressure rises with age due to increasing stiffness of the large arteries, build -up of plaque and increased incidence of cardiac and vascular disease.

What is the AHA recommendation for healthy blood pressure?

Normal:Systolic (Upper #) less than 120, Diastolic (Lower #) less than 80.

Prehypertension: Systolic (Upper #) 120 – 139, Diastolic (Lower #) 80 – 89

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1: Systolic (Upper #) 140 – 159, Diastolic (Lower #) 90 – 99.

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2: Systolic (Upper #) 160 or higher, Diastolic (Lower #) 100 or higher.

Hypertensive Crisis (Emergency care needed): Systolic (Upper #) Higher than 180, Diastolic (Lower #) Higher than 110.

www.heart.org

If HTN is left untreated, it can injure or kill you. Risk increases with age, high cholesterol, heredity, diabetes, gender, physical inactivity, overweight/obesity, family history, smoking and alcohol consumption.

Medication is often prescribed to manage high blood pressure, but changes in quality of life must be considered as an adjunct to treatment. Medication may include a diuretic (water pill), calcium channel blocker (CCB), angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor(ACEI), or angiotensin II receptor blocker (ARB).

Know how to take charge of high blood pressure by assessing areas of your lifestyle to modify your risks. This may decrease your need for medications. These modifiers include weight loss, salt reduction, exercise, smoking cessation and decreasing alcohol consumption. The salt reduction diet is known as DASH, Dietary Approaches to Hypertension. Some doctors may recommend this diet to help manage your high blood pressure. Be sure to always ask your doctor when modifying your lifestyle changes for health.

Resources that may be helpful:

American Heart Association web site www.heart.org

Dept. of Health and Human Services healthfinder.gov.

www.healthypeople.gov/2020

Lois Korn, RN



FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Lord, Teach Us To Pray

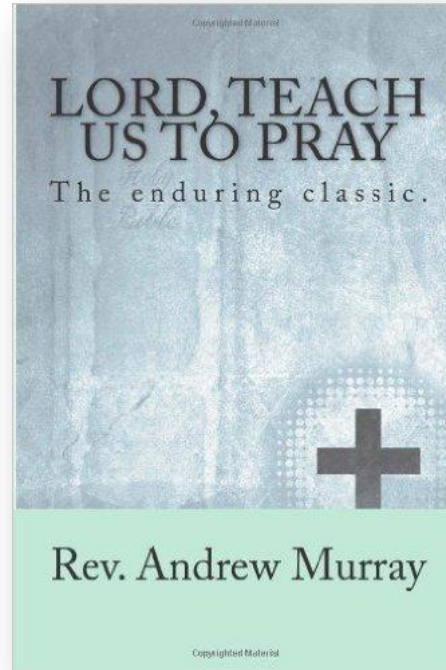
by Rev. Andrew Murray

Since this book was published more than a century ago, countless readers have learned through its pages that no one can teach prayer better than Jesus Christ himself. This enduring classic will transform your prayers and life as you open your heart to the prayer-lessons Jesus gave.

"The Father waits to hear every prayer of faith. He wants to give us whatever we ask for in Jesus' name. If there is one thing I think the Church needs to learn, it is that God intends prayer to have an answer, and that we have not yet fully conceived of what God will do for us if we believe that our prayers will be heard. God hears prayer."

~ www.amazon.com

Send an email to kclconnor@gmail.com if you have a book, music, or movie that has been a special part of your spiritual journey.



HOLY CROSS CONTACT INFORMATION

Items for newsletter:	newsletter@holycrossep.org
Bulletin announcements:	secretary@holycrossep.org
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Fax	(864) 967-0393
Mailing address	PO Box 187, Simpsonville, 29681
Holy Cross Academy	(864) 963-5986
Pastoral counseling	(888) 293-7585
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Diocesan website	www.edusc.org
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